

Are we stressing out our kids?

Stressed out, over-scheduled, hurried: These words are often used to describe children these days.

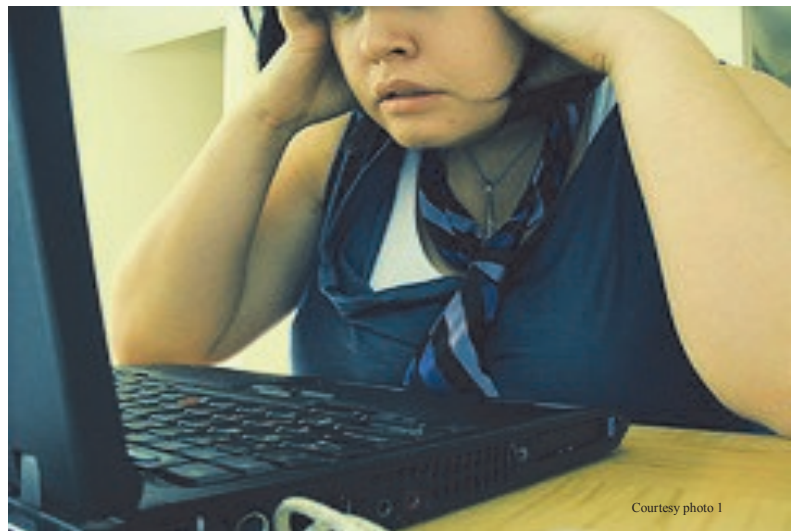
Marian Wilde, GreatSchools
Read more at <http://goo.gl/M8zY31>

Are we unwittingly lowering the quality of life for those we mean to nurture? Are we degrading childhood by demanding ever more of our children? Many parents worry about these questions, as students report that they're feeling stressed out.

"I have been really stressed because of the homework that is being assigned," a middle-school student from Utah recently wrote in an email to GreatSchools. "In pre-algebra, we get at least three pages of homework. In English, we get at least one page and a reading assignment, at least 30-50 pages in our books. Then there is science, five-six pages are assigned all days except Friday. In Utah studies, we get one page with the option of extra credit, which is another page. In French, we have to do two to three pages of verbs in the French dictionaries. In Spanish, 80 flashcards are assigned two days before the test. As you can see, I don't take any extra activities because I don't have time!"

Stress on the rise

"Everyone has their own way of measuring stress, depression being one measure," says



Courtesy photo 1

Denise Clark Pope, author of *"Doing School" How We Are Creating a Generation of Stressed-Out, Materialistic, and Miseducated Students*. "But the consensus is that there are more stressed-out kids."

One recent study from the Stanford School of Medicine indicates that the number of children, ages 7-17, treated for depression more than doubled between 1995 and 2001.

What's causing the stress?

From kindergarten through high school, the causes of childhood stress are numerous. One of the most commonly cited is standardized-test stress, which starts in first-grade in many states.

High-stakes tests, such as the TAKS in Texas and the FCAT

"I'm a 9th grader in high school and 12 years old btw(I skipped grades). I get loads of homework a night. After I had a breakdown recently from sleep deprivation, I just gave up. My report card is generally consisted of only A, under the pressure of parents. Sports and music rehearsals them coming at 8 PM only to finish homework at 3 AM. Mind you, I am a twelve year old, and this sleep schedule is very unusual. I blame my parents to this day of cheating me of my childhood, as I have the responsibilities of a much older pupil. Not only, I have extra pressure again from my parents, to take AP (advanced placement) classes and pass with extra percentage. I just hate my life and what I have succumbed too. With no avail, this continues. "

Excerpt comment from ***Do our kids have too much homework?***

<http://goo.gl/bRaa1>

in Florida, are particularly stressful, for students and teachers alike. Students in certain grades must pass these tests to advance to the next grade. In Florida, children as young as 8 years old face the prospect of being held back if they fail the test. Whether you are for them or against them, high-stakes test create considerable stress.

And while experts are debating whether homework loads are in fact heavier now than in the past, many agree that it is being assigned at an earlier age than before. (Read "[Do our kids have too much homework?](#)")

Another source of school-related stress occurs in high school where more students are taking more rigorous classes, such as Advanced Placement (AP) classes offered by the College Board. In the past 25 years, there has been explosive growth in the number of students taking AP classes, with one-quarter of all high-school graduates having taken at least one in 2004. In addition, more high-school students are now taking the PSAT twice and the SAT and ACT at least once, if not multiple times.



John Rosemond: A few basics of good parenting

Omaha World Herald, December 8, 2014

Despite the conclusion one might reach after reading the latest issue of any popular parenting magazine, the job of parent is actually quite simple; so simple that I can describe the entire ball of wax in less than 15 column inches.

First, a parent's responsibilities — beyond providing the basic necessities of life — are to provide unconditional love and unequivocal leadership. The "trick," if you will, is to keep those provisions in a state of balance. Too much of either is toxic. Love without an equal measure of authority expresses itself in the form of numerous enabling behaviors. Likewise, authority without an equal measure of love quickly turns into abuse of one sort or another.

Second, there are but six fundamental understandings that a parent needs to convey, lovingly and authoritatively, to a child:

1. **You are to pay more attention to me than I pay to you.** (First, all discipline problems are due to children paying insufficient attention to adult authority figures. Second, the more attention you pay a child, the less the child will pay to you. Third, you obtain a child's attention by simply acting like you know what you are doing.)
2. **I am in charge here; therefore, I tell you what to do.** (When giving an instruction to a child, always use the fewest words possible and do not explain

why you are giving the instruction. Explanations sound persuasive and provoke push-back.)

3. **You do what I tell you to do.** (Parents who want child to obey for their own benefit don't get it. Obedience is in the best interest of a child. The research finds what common sense affirms; that is, obedient children are also happy children. You get a child to obey by acting like you know what you are doing.)
4. **You do what I tell you to do simply because I tell you to do it.** (If you do not accompany an instruction with an explanation, then your child is forced to ask for one. That gives you the Golden Opportunity to respond with the most powerful four words in a parent's vocabulary: "Because I said so.")
5. **At any given time, I do not care what you think of me or any decision I make.** (Parenting is not a popularity contest. When you want your child to like you, you end up doing things that negate your ability to provide leadership, which means you end up enabling.)
6. **You can always count on me to provide for and protect you under any and all circumstances.** (If your child is secure in that understanding, then the world is a safe place and, therefore, eventually becomes the child's "oyster.")

Quick activity breaks increase movement, resetting kids' brains

Julie Anderson/Omaha World Herald, December 8, 2014



RYAN SODERLIN/THE WORLD-HERALD

In the foreground, kindergartners Wesley Diaz, left, and Ruay Galdit pretend to be kangaroos during a "brain break" at Gilder Elementary in Bellevue. As elementary schools increase the time pupils spend on math and reading, they get creative to give kids needed physical activity.

Highlights below.

- Gilder Elementary teacher Molly Belling (Omaha Public Schools) turned on a boom box between reading and writing in her kindergarten class.
- Short breaks are known as "brain breaks" for their ability to get blood flowing and reset the brain for the next round of learning. This breaks up the long class blocks and boost activity in schools
- Recess has been limited to devote more math and reading instruction in the wake of No Child Left Behind. One survey found that 20% of districts nationwide reduced recess by an average of 50 minutes a week.
- Researchers have pointed to recess's other benefits including offering kids time of their own to rest, play and imagine as well as learn social skills.
- Gilder Elementary students were 78% proficient in reading and 72% met math proficiency.

Read more on what other elementary and middle schools are offering in Nebraska. <http://goo.gl/hjfmLY>



4 Frugal Ways to Keep Young Kids Busy During Christmas Vacation

Plenty of frugal ways to keep kids, especially preschool and elementary school kids, entertained during the holiday break. Consider 1) family play; 2) visit local library; 3) visit museum; let them stay up late. Read more at <http://goo.gl/wbGG7>



How can I keep my child entertained during Christmas vacation?

Create new rules for old board games, arts/crafts, engage them with helpful tasks. Read more at <http://goo.gl/cZqVxb>



16 Fun Christmas Vacation Activities to Keep Kids Busy

"Mom, I'm bored!" Christmas vacation is quickly approaching! The holiday break can be fun but quickly becomes frustrating if the kids are bored, the weather is cold and they can't go outside. In order to avoid the holiday and winter blues, here are 16 fun activities to keep the kids happy (and mom's sanity in tact) while they are home on break! Read more at <http://goo.gl/oKt3Ai>

Scholarships:

Hispanic Scholarship Fund: <http://hsf.net/>

Application opens January 1, 2015. To prepare, start your MyHSF profile today!

Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation.

Deadline February 1, 2015

<http://buffettscholarships.org/application-requirements>

ACCENTURE AMERICAN INDIAN SCHOLARSHIP

Deadline is January 30, 2015

<http://www.aigcs.org/scholarships/undergraduate-scholarships/>

Gates Millennium Scholars.

Deadline: January 14, 2015



Grants:

Lowes Toolbox for Education grant: <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>

Spring 2015 Cycle. The Spring 2015 cycle is now open. The deadline for submitting applications for this grant cycle is February 13, 2015 11:59pm EST.

Humanities Nebraska grants: <http://humanitiesnebraska.org/grants/opportunities/>

Mini grants are for \$2,000 or less

Grant applications must be submitted no later than the due date. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the grant is due the next business day.

- Mini Grants: **Jan. 1, March 1, May 1, July 1, Sept. 1 and Nov. 1** (Mini grants can fund projects that begin at least one month after the application deadline.)
- Major Grants: **March 1** (for programs beginning May 1 or later) **Aug. 1** (for programs beginning Oct. 1 or later)

The Libri Foundation BOOKS FOR CHILDREN grant program: <http://www.librifoundation.org/apps.html>

Application deadlines for 2015 are: (postmarked by) January 23rd, May 15th, and August 15th. Grants will be awarded January 31st, May 31st, and August 31st.

The Lisa Libraries: <http://www.lisalibraries.org/frames.html>

The Lisa Libraries donates new children's books and small libraries to organizations that work with kids in poor and under-served areas.

Art Resources Transfer: <http://www.ducprogram.org/index.php>

Our Mission

The Distribution to Underserved Communities Library Program (DUC) distributes books on contemporary art and culture free of charge to rural and inner-city libraries, schools and alternative reading centers nationwide

RGK Foundation: <http://www.rgkfoundation.org/public/guidelines>

RGK Foundation awards grants in the broad areas of **Education, Community, and Health/Medicine.**

The Foundation's primary interests within **Education** include programs that focus on formal K-12 education (particularly mathematics, science and reading), teacher development, literacy, and higher education.

How to Apply

RGK Foundation does not accept unsolicited grant proposals. All applicants must complete an electronic Letter of Inquiry from the Web site as the first step. RGK Foundation will entertain one electronic Letter of Inquiry (LOI) per organization in a twelve-month period. Organizations that submit unsolicited proposals will receive notification directing them to submit an electronic Letter of Inquiry via the Web site.

First Book: Access to New Books for Children in Need: <http://www.firstbook.org/receive-books>

Register to Receive Books

First Book empowers educators with an unprecedented choice of high quality books and materials.

Our resources help to:

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- Impart a love of reading to children.

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- First Book National Book Bank offering free books (pay only for shipping typically at 35 to 50 cents a book)
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To access these resources, complete our simple online registration (It only takes a few minutes).

- See more at: <http://www.firstbook.org/receive-books#sthash.jhwDyyQW.dpuf>





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Detailed information on the NDPS certification program may be found on our [Web site](#).

Please click the button below if you wish to apply.





National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

Eugene T. Moore School of Education
Clemson University, 209 Martin Street
Clemson, SC 29631-1555 Telephone: 864-656-2599
email: ndpc@clermson.e www.dropoutprevention.org

Reminder: State Offices will be closed
December 25-26, 2014 and January 1, 2015.
Have a safe and fun school break.

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